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General and complete disarmament

Relationship between disarmament and development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/32. It discusses recent trends in the further strengthening within the United Nations of the relationship between disarmament and development. In addition, the report contains information received from Governments on the subject.

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I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 64/32, the Assembly stressed the central role of the United Nations in the disarmament-development relationship and requested the Secretary-General to strengthen the role of the Organization in this field. In paragraph 2 of the resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to take action, through appropriate organs and within available resources, for the implementation of the action programme adopted at the 1987 International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development.[1] In paragraph 7 of the resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report at its sixty-fifth session on the implementation of the resolution. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

2. Furthermore, in paragraph 6 of the resolution, the General Assembly reiterated its invitation to Member States to provide the Secretary-General with information regarding measures and efforts to devote part of the resources made available by the implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements to economic and social development, with a view to reducing the ever-widening gap between developed and developing countries.

3. Pursuant to that request, on 5 March 2010, the Secretariat sent out a note verbale to Member States seeking their views. As of the writing of the present report, replies have been received from the following States: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Cuba, Lebanon, Mexico, Panama, Serbia and Ukraine. This information is contained in section III below.

II. Strengthening further the role of the United Nations in the disarmament-development relationship

4. The issue of disarmament and development has long figured on the agenda of the United Nations. Article 26 of the Charter of the United Nations entrusts the Security Council with formulating plans for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments that would "promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources". The issue was discussed extensively at the tenth special session of the General Assembly in 1978,[2] and the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development took place in 1987. Related General Assembly resolutions on disarmament and development have been tabled since 1978.

5. Since 1981, under a related process, Member States have been providing information on their military spending through the United Nations Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures. Under this instrument, Governments are called upon to report annually to the Secretary-General their military expenditures for the latest fiscal year for which data are available. The United Nations publishes and circulates this information. Thus far, more than 120 Member States have reported to this instrument at least once. Significantly, for the first time since the instrument's inception, the General Assembly, by its resolution 62/13, requested the Secretary-

[1] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.87.IX.8.

[2] See General Assembly resolution S-10/2.

General to establish a group of governmental experts, on the basis of equitable geographical representation, to review the operation and further development of the instrument commencing in 2010 and to transmit the report of the group of experts to the General Assembly for its consideration at its sixty-sixth session.

6. In 2003 and 2004, a Group of Governmental Experts conducted an in-depth examination of the relationship between disarmament and development and produced a comprehensive report (A/59/119). This report provided "a reappraisal of the disarmament-development relationship and the role of the Organization in this connection, taking into account all the major international changes that have taken place since the adoption of the Final Document of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development in 1987". Notably, the report called for mainstreaming the disarmament-development relationship into the ongoing work of the Organization.

7. Insofar as the issue of disarmament and development is discussed as a trade-off between the level of military expenditures and the level of economic development in a country, no consensus has been reached among Member States. Some States are of the view that these two issues are directly interrelated, while others perceive this nexus as being more complex.

8. There have been a number of initiatives and programmes, within the United Nations and outside of it, which take into account the linkage between disarmament, arms regulation and development, and which therefore represent forms of mainstreaming the topic in existing or emerging frameworks. Such initiatives and programmes were fuelled by the acknowledgement of world leaders in 2005 that "development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing".[3] They illustrate that the relationship between disarmament and development is a highly topical one when dealt with in the context of specific themes or processes. Such approaches may examine the destabilizing influence that armed violence, poor controls over the trade in arms and ammunition, illicit drug trafficking, weak and corrupt institutions, the lack of good governance and other factors exert on social and economic development, particularly in conflict-prone areas. The related issue of excessive military expenditure diverting resources from attainment of the Millennium Development Goals has also been identified as a cause for persistent underdevelopment. Other obstacles for development include the contamination of areas such as roads, fields, wells and orchards with landmines and unexploded submunitions from cluster bombs. The report of the Secretary-General on the relationship between disarmament and development (A/64/153) submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, gave an overview of recent developments in this regard.

9. In paragraph 9 of the report it is mentioned that, as far as the internal coordination within the Organization on these issues is concerned, the main existing mechanisms for coordination within the United Nations are the United Nations Mine Action Team, the Coordinating Action on Small Arms Mechanism, and the Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, which aim at ensuring that the relationship between disarmament and development is covered effectively in their respective areas through involvement of all relevant actors from within the United Nations system.

[3] General Assembly resolution 60/1.

Recent developments

10. On the issue of armed violence, 61 States adopted on 12 May 2010 the Oslo Commitments on Armed Violence.[4] This document commits States to a number of practical measures designed to reduce the incidence and impact of armed violence by 2015. These include a commitment to monitor the incidence and impact of armed violence; the recognition of the rights of victims; the promotion and integration of armed violence prevention into local, national and international development plans; increased international cooperation and assistance for armed violence prevention; and the call for the General Assembly high-level plenary meeting on the Millennium Development Goals in September 2010 to discuss armed violence in the context of the Millennium Development Goals. The Oslo Commitments on Armed Violence followed the report of the Secretary-General on promoting development through the reduction and prevention of armed violence (A/64/228), in which the Secretary-General called for greater international action on the issue, as well as the development of goals, targets and indicators for prevention and reduction.

11. In the field of small arms, the United Nations Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects was held in New York from 14 to 18 June 2010. An implicit reference to the relation between disarmament and development in the meeting's outcome document was made as much as it relates to assistance and cooperation (see A/CONF.192/BMS/2010/3). The implementation of the Programme of Action will be further examined by an open-ended meeting of governmental experts in 2011, which is mandated to address key implementation challenges and opportunities, including international cooperation and assistance, and at its review conference scheduled in 2012.

12. The ongoing discussion within the context of the United Nations on an arms trade treaty seeks to address irresponsible transfers of conventional arms, and the serious negative impact that such transfers may have on security, development and human rights. The Preparatory Committee meetings for the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, which are scheduled in 2010 and 2011, are expected to serve as useful forums to further discuss and develop this topic.

13. In the field of mine action, the Cartagena Summit on a Mine-free World (30 November-4 December 2009) came to a successful conclusion. Its political declaration underlined the humanitarian accomplishment in the implementation of the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention and its contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the will to ensure the full and effective participation and inclusion of mine victims in the social, cultural, economic and political life of their communities. The Cartagena Action Plan, another outcome of the Summit, also highlights the commitment of States parties to continue to promote the inclusion of mine action activities in ongoing development programmes and the identification of mine action as a priority in local, national and international development actions.

14. The Convention on Cluster Munitions, in which States parties expressed their concern for the fact that cluster munition remnants "kill or maim civilians, including women and children, obstruct economic and social development, including through

[4] See www.osloconferencearmedviolence.no.

the loss of livelihood, impede post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction, delay or prevent the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, can negatively impact on national and international peacebuilding and humanitarian assistance efforts, and have other severe consequences that can persist for many years after use", obtained its thirtieth ratification on 16 February 2010 and will enter into force, accordingly, on 1 August 2010.

III. Information received from Governments

Bosnia and Herzegovina

[Original: English]
[13 April 2010]

Agreement on Subregional Arms Control

1. Guided by the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Annex 1-B, Agreement on Regional Stabilizations, Article IV, signed in Paris on 14 December 1995, Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the Agreement on Subregional Arms Control in Vienna on 4 January 1996.

2. The Agreement on Subregional Arms Control established new forms of cooperation in the field of security aimed at building transparency and confidence and achieving balanced and stable defence force levels at the lowest numbers consistent with the Parties respective security and the need to avoid an arms race in the region.

3. The Agreement is based on the same guidelines and principles as the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty. Four countries are involved in its implementation: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Serbia. Thanks to this Agreement, the southern European region has set an example as far as arms control and disarmament in a post-conflict situation are concerned. A high level of cooperation has been achieved in the area and today the Parties continue to work on a common effort to further strengthen stability, transparency and confidence. More than 9,000 items of heavy weapon have been reduced so far.

Treaty on Open Skies

4. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a party to the Treaty on Open Skies, which established a programme of unarmed aerial surveillance flights over the entire territory of its participants. It is designed to enhance mutual understanding and confidence by giving all participants, regardless of their size, a major role in gathering information about military forces and activities of concern to them and is one of the most wide-ranging international efforts to date promoting openness and transparency of military forces and activities.

Vienna Document 1999

5. Bosnia and Herzegovina also participates in other conventional arms-control agreements concluded within the framework of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, including the Vienna Document 1999 of the negotiations on

confidence and security-building measures, which is designed to promote mutual trust and dispel concern about military activities by encouraging openness and transparency. Its provisions regarding the exchange and verification of military information on participating States' armed forces, their defence policies and military activities, including the size of defence budgets, the location, size and strength of military units and formations, the exchange of annual calendars and prior notification of certain military activities, as well as observation of certain military activities, increase transparency and confidence by promoting broader and more comprehensive cooperation among States on the regional and subregional levels.

6. Bosnia and Herzegovina faces a number of important challenges related to arms control at the present time. According to recent research, a significant proportion of Bosnians possess firearms, many of which (perhaps three quarters) are unregistered. The widespread availability of small arms and light weapons in Bosnia and Herzegovina is obviously of significant concern, given their destabilizing potential. Further, organized crime remains a problem in Bosnia and Herzegovina and poses a threat to both the rule of law and human security.

7. The independent studies conducted in 2004 indicate that over 8,000 people have died as a result of the misuse of weapons since the end of the war in 1995. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Bosnia and Herzegovina media reporting of 2007 and 2008 a total of 455 weapons-related incidents have occurred with over 26 per cent of mortality index. In just the first four months of 2009 a total of 22 armed robberies were reported.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has jointly, with UNDP initiated the projects targeting reduction of uncontrolled presence of small arms and light weapons and ammunition, improvement of the control and coordination mechanisms. In addition, the Bosnia and Herzegovina Coordination Board developed and is implementing the National Strategy and Action Plan for Small Arms and Light Weapons Control that sets out the needs, activities, measures and responsible parties for the implementation of the Strategy.

8. To this end, UNDP and the Coordination Board developed and launched the small arms control programme, which works towards addressing these challenges through:

(1) Enhancing the institutional capacities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to reduce and control small arms and light weapons and ammunition in Bosnia and Herzegovina through better informed policymakers and support to the National Coordination Board and the implementation of the National Strategy for Small Arms and Light Weapons Control in Bosnia and Herzegovina;

(2) Destruction of surplus and seized weapons;

(3) Disposal of ammunition through upgrade of national capacities.

Brazil

[Original: English]
[22 June 2010]

1. Brazil is a party to all major multilateral instruments in the field of disarmament and arms limitation. Each year, as a means to promote openness and transparency, Brazil submits its reports to the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures and to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Brazil also fosters confidence-building measures within its region, such as the recent establishment of a South American defence council, with the aim of consolidating South America as a zone of peace, and a base for democratic stability and comprehensive development of the peoples, and as a contribution to world peace.

2. At the same time, at the international level, Brazil regrets that, more than three decades after the tenth special session of the General Assembly, no significant progress has been made with regard to general and complete disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament. On the contrary, arguments continue to be used in order to justify the possession of nuclear arms, even though they are of no use to address the security threats of a post-cold war world, such as terrorism, transnational crime and internal conflicts. Brazil is of the view that nuclear weapons diminish the security of all States, including of those who possess them.

3. Recognizing the importance of the symbiotic relationship between disarmament and development and the crucial role of security in this connection, Brazil believes that those considerable resources devoted by some States to maintaining and developing their nuclear-weapons capabilities could be geared towards the promotion of economic and social development throughout the world. In a world in transition, Brazil considers that political will is necessary to address and correct those situations that work against peace and prosperity, above all the anachronism posed by nuclear weapons.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[17 May 2010]

1. The growing and alarming arms race, the cost of which now exceeds one trillion dollars, is absorbing far too great a proportion of the world's human, financial, natural and technological resources, placing a heavy burden on the economies of all countries and affecting the international flow of trade, finance and technology.

2. The global economy is currently deeply mired in one of the most severe financial crises since the beginning of the past century, particularly in developing countries. Nevertheless, military expenditures increased by 45 per cent in the last decade and, far from decreasing, continue to grow at an alarming rate. The United States of America alone, the world's largest investor in arms, accounted for 58 per cent of the total increase in global expenditure during this period.

3. The armed forces are major consumers of a large variety of non-renewable resources and reserves, both of energy and of raw materials. It is clear that the major

military powers consume the most raw materials for military purposes, even more than they consume resources in general.

4. Military and related activities absorb a large proportion of the scientific and technological potential. It is estimated that some 25 per cent of the world's scientists are currently involved in military-related activities. It has been calculated that approximately 40 per cent of total research and development spending since the Second World War has been used for military purposes.

5. The economic consequences of military expenditures for the developing countries are even more negative than for the most developed countries. For every dollar spent on arms in developing countries, it has been established that domestic investment decreases by 25 cents. Imports of arms exacerbate the trade deficit of developing countries and account for almost 50 per cent of the trade deficit in some third world countries.

6. Since 1960, rich countries have spent at least 15 trillion dollars on the manufacture of weapons (approximately 334 billion dollars annually); however, they have transferred only 2.6 trillion dollars in development assistance to poor countries (almost 58 billion dollars annually). In other words, rich countries have invested at least six times more in manufacturing weapons than they have disbursed in development assistance. At that rate, developing countries would have to wait 260 years (more than two and a half centuries) to receive development assistance equal to the amount wasted on military expenditures by industrialized countries in only 45 years (not even half a century).

7. Half of the resources invested in arms throughout the world in the last two years would have increased annual production over this period to a level higher than the gross domestic product of sub-Saharan Africa, the world's poorest region and the one with the slowest growth rate.

8. The United Nations has calculated that it would take only 80 billion dollars each year for a decade to overcome poverty, hunger, ill-health, lack of education and poor housing around the globe. Expenditure on arms is thus 180 times greater than spending to alleviate hunger, promote agricultural development and mitigate the economic situation that has arisen in recent months as a result of the rise in food prices.

9. The increase in military expenditures is a factor that suffices to create mistrust and legitimate international concern. We cannot stand idly by while global military spending continues to far exceed the funds allocated to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These problems must be addressed through urgent action.

10. Cuba reiterates its proposal to create a fund, administered by the United Nations, into which at least half of current military expenditure would be paid in order to meet the economic and social development requirements of poor countries. This initiative, apart from its obvious benefits, could have added value as a confidence-building measure and would be a crucial factor for the achievement of the MDGs.

11. Cuba also reiterates its support for the action programme adopted at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, held in September 1987, which included an international commitment

to allocate a portion of the resources released through disarmament for purposes of socio-economic development. Cuba also renews its support for discussion of this matter in the General Assembly and for implementation of the recommendations contained in the resolutions of the Assembly.

Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[10 May 2010]

1. Lebanon has always supported agreements related to disarmament in general and weapons of mass destruction in particular, because of the threat that such weapons pose to security and peace and the money that is spent on them, which, if diverted to various fields of development, could make an enormous contribution.

2. Lebanon suffers from armed conflict and is in need of any assistance that could alleviate that suffering. Notwithstanding the security and military circumstances which the country is experiencing, and the numerous operational concerns of the army along the borders and internally, pursuant to implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), action is being taken, using all the means available, towards economic and social development.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[29 April 2010]

1. Mexico believes that disarmament and development are two of the most urgent challenges facing the international community today. Moreover, it is conscious that disarmament and development are independent, multidimensional and mutually reinforcing processes that are linked by the issue of security in all its aspects. It therefore supports initiatives promoting the effective fulfilment of disarmament and development commitments.

2. Mexico is strongly convinced that the effective fulfilment of international commitments arising from existing agreements on disarmament and arms control can help to counter the negative impact of excessive military spending on the world population's socio-economic development.

3. Mexico notes that the Secretary-General has invited Member States to provide information regarding measures and efforts to devote part of the resources made available by the implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements to economic and social development, with a view to reducing the ever-widening gap between developed and developing countries, and would like to provide the following information:

- In its public expenditure policy, the Mexican Government has directed most of its resources to social development;
- This year, the Government of Mexico will direct 96.7 per cent of the budgetary items initially intended for arms procurement to cover recurrent expenditures (personal services, the purchase of materials, operation and supplies); the

remaining 3.3 per cent will be directed to capital costs (personal and real property and construction);

- In the light of the above, the Government of Mexico has not currently earmarked resources for the acquisition of new arms.

4. It is also noteworthy that a significant amount of spending by the Mexican armed forces is allocated to social and humanitarian projects benefiting the public, such as medical care in marginalized rural areas, operations designed to protect the public from the impact of natural disasters and assistance related to the care and preservation of the environment, thereby helping to improve Mexico's economic and social environment.

Panama

[Original: Spanish]
[23 June 2010]

The Republic of Panama has incorporated into its domestic laws various multilateral treaties with these objectives, such as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, and the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.

Serbia

[Original: English]
[12 May 2010]

1. Serbia attaches great importance to the programmes of economic and social development funded by resources made available by the implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements, especially in the developing countries, as provided for in the provisions of General Assembly resolution 64/32, regarding the relationship between disarmament and development.

2. Arms and military equipment in the stockpiles of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Serbia, identified as surplus, are sold or, in the absence of a buyer, scrapped and destroyed under relevant technological procedures in facilities in which requisite capacities are available (TRZ, Kragujevac; Krusik, Valjevo and Prva iskra, Baric).

3. Pursuant to the memorandum of understanding and the implementing agreement concluded between the Ministry of Defence of then Serbia and Montenegro and the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA), the destruction of more than 1,400,000 anti-personnel mines was carried out in TRZ, Kragujevac, in 2005, 2006 and 2007. In addition, the destruction/demilitarization of 3,764 pieces of missile 9M32M "ARROW-2M" took place in Krusik, Valjevo, and was funded by the donation of the United States Department of State.

Ukraine

[Original: Russian]
[19 May 2010]

1. The main objective of developing the Ukraine's armed forces is to establish a small, well-trained professional force with modern weapons and military equipment.

2. During the restructuring measures carried out in the period from 2000 to 2010, the Ukraine's armed forces decommissioned 3,192 conventional weapons and units of military equipment, namely:

1,172 battle tanks;

1,027 armoured combat vehicles;

504 artillery systems (with a calibre of 100 mm and above);

392 combat aircraft; and,

97 attack helicopters.

3. Over this period, troop levels in the Ukraine's armed forces decreased from 310,000 to 150, 000 military personnel.

4. An important priority for the development of the armed forces in 2010 is the disposal of surplus weapons, military equipment, ammunition and missile propellant components from arsenals, bases and warehouses which are scheduled to be dismantled in 2010 and 2011.

5. From 2006 to 2009, six missile and ammunition storage sites were dismantled at 16 arsenals, bases and warehouses of the armed forces scheduled for closure.

6. In 2009 alone, the Ministry of Defence disposed of 23,100 tonnes of ammunition from military units of the armed forces.

7. The Ukraine's armed forces have been actively involved in reducing the country's nuclear missile potential. All 222 deployed strategic offensive weapons have been eliminated (taking into account those transferred to the Russian Federation).

8. All strategic and tactical nuclear warheads removed from Ukraine have been dismantled and destroyed at nuclear power companies in the Russian Federation.

9. Work is continuing to transfer the territories of empty military bases to communal ownership or to place them under the management of other central Government authorities.

10. Demining activities at former military training grounds continue to be another high priority. To facilitate the clearance of explosive ordnance, the Government has approved the framework for a targeted State mine action programme for the period 2009 to 2014.

11. Surplus military equipment of the armed forces is sold in accordance with the current legislation, as established by clearly regulated procedure. Funds from the sale of surplus military equipment are directed to Government revenues and used exclusively for defence spending.